

It's Smart To Be Gallery Wise!

THE WILLIAM ROCKHILL NELSON GALLERY OF ART

AND ATKINS MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS

N E W S

F L A S H E S

September

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DENVER WATERCOLOR ARTISTS: The loan exhibition for the month of September presents watercolor paintings by six Denver artists. This exhibition, which is circulated by the Denver Art Museum, is the work of the Rocky Mountain Group, organized for the purpose of acquainting other sections of the country with the work of Denver artists.

There is a refreshing vigor and charm and an interesting diversity of technic displayed in the exhibition which for the most part presents scenes of Colorado and the Rocky Mountain region. "Two Pines" and "Central City" by Vance Kirkland, director of the Kirkland School of Art in Denver, are outstanding for their strength and richness of color. Louise Emerson Ronnebeck also presents trees with great effectiveness, while Estelle Stinchfield, with broad, free brush strokes pictures scenes on the range. Albert Byron Olson has chosen as his theme scenes from France, Italy, and Spain, which in their crisp and delicate coloring and careful attention to pattern reflect his background of mural painting. Louise Spalding's "Colorado Wild Flowers" is full of sparkle and fresh color and she too finds interest in Central City with a view of Colonel Randolph's house. The two still-life studies are by Marion Hendrie, who also shows landscapes of charm and delicate feeling.

Included with the Colorado group are paintings by Ward Lockwood, whose work is well known to Kansas Citizens. Mr. Lockwood, who is a resident of Taos, has depicted the picturesque New Mexican country in a variety of moods and methods of handling. Particularly fine is the little "Home in Taos Valley".

DRAWINGS FROM THE PERMANENT COLLECTION: The central loan gallery features this month a selection from the permanent collection of drawings. These studies, rendered in the mediums of pen, pencil, and chalk, are quick sketches, dashed off in the heat of inspiration, and are, in most cases, as close to the spontaneous workings of the artist's mind as anything in art. Representing the Italians are a fine "Study of Drapery" in the style of Leonardo; two splendid nudes by Guercino and Perugino, the master of Raphael; a dashing head by the facile Tiepolo; and a typical "Deposition" by Veronese. The Dutch contribute such typical examples as "Peasants", one of the two known drawings by Jan Steen. A preliminary drawing for our own painting "Repose" by Gainsborough and "Sportsmen in the Dumps" by the humorous Rowlandson feature the English school. The rare "View of the Tiber" by Claude Lorrain; a Boucher "Cupid", study for our "Diana and Calisto"; and exquisite Watteau; and drawings by Ingres, Daumier, Delacroix and Degas complete the group with outstanding examples of the French school.

PERSIAN POTTERY: Persian pottery will be featured as the Masterpiece of the Week of September 8th. The group displayed is representative of the finest wares from the 10th to the 14th centuries. During the early years of this period the potters produced a type of ware which is known by the trade name of "Gabri". The large bowl of this type which is displayed exhibits the strength, vigor, and deft execution of these early potters. The 12th, 13th and 14th centuries are regarded as the classic period in Persian ceramics. The outstanding characteristics of this era are exemplified in the other three objects in this masterpiece group.

THE PRINT GALLERIES: The regular print room, Gallery XV, has recently been hung with a general selection of outstanding European prints, many of which will be familiar as Masterpieces of the Week. "Saint Michael" and "Christ on the Road to Calvary" illustrate the skill of Martin Schongauer; Hans Baldung Grün, Hans Burgkmair, and Lucas Cranach represent the justly famous German school. A fine Gothic



"Last Supper" by the Master of Zwolle, and a naive but interesting etching by Jean Duvet exemplify the best from their periods in Holland and France. Featured in the group are the magnificent "Battle of the Nudes" by Antonio Pollaiuolo and the rare "Battle of the Sea Gods" by Mantegna, two of the most sought after prints from the Renaissance period.

Albrecht Dürer, possibly the greatest name in German art, a personality, scholar and traveller, was surely the greatest of German print makers. Gallery XVI during the coming few weeks will contain a display of woodcuts and engravings from his press. One wall is devoted to an excellent set of his delicate and moving "Small Passion Series". Also there appear in the forty prints shown such famous old favorites as "Nemesis", the great portrait of "Erasmus", "The Little Horse", "The Rhinoceros", and the powerful and brooding "Melancholia".

EUROPEAN PORCELAINS: Outstanding examples of the Gallery's collection of European pottery and porcelain of the 16th to 18th centuries are on display in Gallery XIII. One case contains four pieces of 16th century majolica from Deruta, Gubbio and Siena. A large Deruta circular dish with a feminine profile portrait of dignified simplicity is distinguished by an exquisite, iridescent lusted glaze which simulates mother-of-pearl in all of its delicate tints. German porcelain of the 18th century is shown at its best in an elaborate group, The Victory of Beauty Over Envy, from the Frankenthal factory, executed by Conrad Link. The wares of the outstanding English porcelain factories at Chelsea, Derby and Bow are represented by a number of typical figurines.

CHINESE PAINTINGS: In Gallery XXIV an exhibition of Chinese paintings dating from the 12th to the 18th centuries has been installed. The visitor will find in this room a new department of the Gallery's collection, for only two of the paintings have been hung in previous exhibitions.

Chinese painting is executed with a swift sure line, without preliminary sketch. It is done in ink and washes on either silk or paper, often with the addition of tempera coloring. This method of painting makes for a directness and sensitivity impossible to attain in the Western medium of oil pigments. The greatest period of Chinese painting was the Sung Dynasty (960-1280), when the art of landscape painting reached its apogee. There are two especially outstanding examples of this period displayed in the current exhibit. One is a perpendicular landscape executed in ink washes on silk by an unknown artist of the 13th century. In this painting, which is a triumph of draughtsmanship, the artist has succeeded in translating the very spirit of landscape into line. Another example of this period is a 13th century hand scroll, also by an unknown artist, depicting a mountainous landscape with rivers and lakes, range upon range of lofty peaks fading into the misty distances. This painting was formerly in the collection of the great Emperor Ch'ien Lung (1736-1795) and is listed in the Imperial catalogue.

MEISSEN PORCELAIN HEAD: The Masterpiece for the week of September 15th will be a recent acquisition shown for the first time, a Bust of a Child, executed in Meissen porcelain by the recognized master of his time, Johann Joachim Kändler. The finest of three existing busts by this artist, it sums up the output of Germany's greatest factory at the zenith of its success.

NEW ACQUISITIONS IN INDIAN ART: Recent additions to the collection of Indian Art are exhibited for the first time in Gallery XXII. Four small sculptures from Mathura portray some of the earliest work from his important school. There are two Buddhist heads, one of which has a shaven head and spiral ushnisha (top knot denoting great intellectual faculties) in the identical style of the famous Buddha in the Mathura Museum. The other Buddhist head is covered with the traditional snail shell curls. There are two yakshas from a railing pillar which are in the full rounded feminine forms characteristic of the Indian aesthetic ideals. This group of archaic sculpture, which dates from the Kushana period, about the 2nd century, forms an interesting contrast to the large section of a frieze from a Brahmanistic temple at Mathura of the 11th century or early medieval period.



The Hindu god Siva is here depicted in a benevolent aspect. With his consort Parvati he is represented seated on the back of the bull Nandi, accompanied by a group of musicians and dancers. The frieze, which is in exceptionally high relief, presents a pattern of rhythmic grandeur as the swaying figures thrill to the music of the cosmic god. This relief is executed in sandstone to which nine hundred years of Indian sun and jungle rains have added a warmth of tone and richness of coloring.

EARLY AMERICAN BLOWN GLASS: The Masterpiece of the Week for September 22nd will present a case of 18th and early 19th century American blown glass. Brilliant and fragile, these colorful pieces recall the romantic histories of the early American manufacturers who struggled against the handicaps of a new country to produce glass rivalling that of Venice.

CHINESE TOMB FIGURES: Chinese pottery tomb figures will be selected as the masterpiece for the first week in October. Figures of maidens and soldiers, horses and their grooms, musicians and attendants, all made of pottery, were used in ancient China to bury with the dead. This custom was the humanized, more convenient development of the far more ancient custom of burying actual animals and living people with the deceased. It is from these little figures, preserved in tombs for so many centuries, that we learn most of what we know of clothes and fashions and manners of life in far off China more than a thousand years ago.

NEWS FROM ABROAD: Letters from Mr. Gardner, the director, indicate that he is thoroughly enjoying his summer in Europe, but is nevertheless looking forward to his return to the Gallery about the first of October. He sends the following comments on the many fine exhibitions which are being held in Europe this summer:

"One of the most interesting things in Brussels was the fine Impressionist show, arranged in connection with the Exposition. It was beautifully hung in the Palais des Beaux Arts, a modern museum with fine top lighting and gray velvet walls. Lionello Venturi had told me it was one of the most inclusive ever gathered together and while some artists like Manet were not represented by their greatest works, I quite agreed with him. It was quite a thrill - and in a way a compliment - to find two of the pictures from our French 19th century show among them - the Degas Women Ironing and the Toulouse-Lautrec Toilette.

"Cézanne was very well represented, and The Man with the Pipe from Mannheim is certainly one of his finest portraits. The Bains d'Avignon is perhaps the best of his small series of nudes. The Gauguins were all superb, perhaps the outstanding one being the immense "D'où Venons Nous", which is at least fifteen feet long, and like a great mural of Tahiti, with a brilliant colour pattern and fine landscape passages. Manet's early Portrait of Artist's Mother and Father and the fine Balcony from the Louvre stood out in his group.

"The Bather" by Renoir, early and very like the Chester Dale Diana, is a superb nude that recalls Courbet in its handling. To me, almost finer than the figure pieces were the flowers, particularly a great mass of red geraniums in a copper bowl. The unfinished Circus by Seurat from the Louvre, was a pale symphony beside some of his earlier and fuller toned seascapes.

"The great thrill of the whole exhibition was the Van Gogh room, twelve canvases all seen for the first time. The portraits included the great Père Tanguy and another version of the Berceuse, overwhelming in their force and colours, with a third variation of Roulin. The Road of Cypresses was the most dramatic of all and a purely lyric note was caught in Le Meridienne, with its pale blue sky, its soft orange landscape, and a very sensitive colour harmony of blue and lavender in the figures. Most interesting was another variation of the Olive Orchard, which is in greens and yellows, and taken from the same point as our own fine Van Gogh. It is less pleasing in colour, and must have been made on a dull, gray day, as one does not feel the brilliancy of the sun as in our version.

"The group of old masters held at the Exposition itself was particularly fine, including many important vander Weydens, Braughels



"and other early Flemish artists. Here I saw for the first time in colour the Antonio Moro Portrait of Granvella, which was painted in the same year and must have been inspired by our Titian. In fact, it was the Moro portrait which identified the subject of our picture when it was discovered after centuries of being lost. It is in Moro's best manner, yet shows convincingly how much greater artist Titian was, how he presented the character of his sitters and not just the externals. It was interesting to note that the Cardinal was wearing the same black coat, carrying the same gloves, and wearing the identical rings found in our version.

"Here I saw also for the first time Poussin's Triumph of Pan, from the collection of Paul Jamot of the Louvre. It is certainly a companion piece to our great Triumph of Bacchus, as it is the same size and several of the figures are almost identical. Even the greens, blues and oranges repeat the tonalities of our picture by the artist.

"The New Boymans Museum at Rotterdam was most interesting. Built around a hollow square, it is two stories high and quite simple and modern in feeling. The rooms are small, but connecting, and there are no corridors. All the painting galleries are on the second floor and have superb top light, which enters by a series of parallel slanting shutters, which throw the daylight on the walls. The center of the ceiling is closed off by a solid section. The result is a soft natural light on all the pictures that is superior to any yet seen. One felt the dead white of the plaster walls was not the happiest solution of background, and I understand they are to be tinted. The Vermeer exhibition here was slightly disappointing, because the great ones from the Hague and Berlin were not included, but Pieter de Hooch stood out as a close rival to the master from Delft.

"The Mauritshuis at the Hague stands out for its fine Holbeins, the supreme Head of Girl and View of Delft by Vermeer and most of all for Rembrandt's Anatomy Lesson, very well hung and lighted. It is a series of portraits, each as fine and as delving in character as our Boy with Black Cap.

"The quaint town of Haarlem with its canals and picturesque old houses is an ideal setting for the eight great group pictures of Frans Hals. They have all been cleaned and the early Archers of St. George is a blaze of colour that seems unbelievable. Yet even greater are the two Regents groups in the last room, painted in the black and white period of our fine portrait. Here there are no gay colors to detract from the superb character studies and the thrilling brush work!

"Amsterdam with its canals, its tall slim buildings with their capricious roofs, is an ideal setting for a great Rembrandt show. Here his first fine mansion stands in the Joden-Bree Straat, indicative of his early prosperity and happiness with Saskia, here is the Rozen-Gracht, where he went when poverty and unhappiness dogged his footsteps. Certainly that street has changed since Rembrandt's day, as now it is a wide avenue with cinemas and blaring radios, but many of the side canals and streets, with their quaint old houses, some of them leaning at precarious angles, are just as they were when Rembrandt went out with his sketch book, seeking types for his great biblical paintings and etchings.

"The exhibition of his work in the Ryksmuseum is a little disappointing, as the great Night Watch and the Syndics are in widely separated rooms and the Anatomy Lesson is in the Hague. But it is a fine group, superbly presented, with one of the outstanding pictures the self-portrait from the Andrew Mellon Collection. Certainly our Youth With a Black Cap would have shown out like a jewel among them, as there was no finer or more representative work!"